

## **Other Local Public Health Stories:**

**Monroe County:** A citizen came in to get a birth certificate for a family member, all for the purpose of getting herself a passport. Because her mother was an immigrant to this country, there was no U.S. birth record for her mother, so she had to have birth/death records for herself and her siblings, showing her mother's name. The Monroe County Health Department couldn't provide all of the records she needed, because the births/deaths didn't occur in this county, but staff determined the details of the issues and helped direct the citizen to all the proper places for documentation, providing phone numbers, addresses, etc. She was thrilled with the health department's services, and because of this, she filed for a position on the health department's board this year.

**Monroe County:** Many years ago, in the early days of Parents as Teachers, one of the agency's registered nurses went to the school superintendent and explained the program and asked for permission to provide the program in the school. Subsequently, she was the parent educator for the superintendent's 18-month-old son. Because of PAT services, this child's hearing deficit was discovered and treatment obtained, making this child a different person. The parents (superintendent) were thrilled and while the superintendent was here, was PAT's biggest supporter.

**City of St. Louis:** During July 2012, a health inspector with the City of St. Louis was conducting an inspection. At the conclusion of that inspection, he was asked to check on a neighbor who was living in his backyard because of a fire that had damaged his home. When he drove up front of the property, he assumed he'd been given the wrong address because it was in total ruins. He proceeded to drive through the alley to observe the premise from the rear. Only after exiting his vehicle did he notice "Mr. B" sleeping in a chair in the rear yard. There was scattered refuse, boxes, clothing and items that were savaged from the fire in the rear yard.

He called out to the gentleman and got no answer. He called a second time and still didn't get an answer. At this point, he became concerned and thought that maybe the gentleman was unconscious or deceased after being in the hundred plus degree weather. The inspector decided to give one more try. This time Mr. B opened up his eyes. He introduced myself to be an inspector from the health department and asked his name and why he was sleeping in the heat. He stated that his home had burned down in January but that he still had items in the basement that he had to protect. He went on to say that looters had stolen some of his possessions and beaten him up so bad he had to go to the hospital. His wife had died several years earlier and he had no family in town. During daylight hours, he would take a shower, use the bathroom, and occasionally get food from a friend or neighbor who lived nearby. But most of the time at night, he would sleep in the backyard to try and prevent any additional looting.

Mr. B's appearance was frail. He had on a soiled shirt and pants with no shoes or socks on his feet. When I asked the last time he had eaten or drank anything, he responded the day before. The inspector gave him a bottle of water and told him he would be back soon.

The inspector went to Kentucky Fried Chicken and purchased a value meal with a drink. He went a block down the street to Dollar General and bought a pair of sandals and a quart of juice. Upon his return, Mr. B immediately thanked him and began to cry. He put on the sandals and they were a perfect fit. The inspector gave him additional water from his car and helped him wash his hands before he ate. Before he left, he asked him to promise that he would go to his friend's house. He assured me that when his friend got home from work, he would. He also asked if he would be open to any help from the health department or other agencies to assist with his situation. Mr. B was in agreement to do whatever he needed to do to receive any help.

The inspector reported his findings to the Commissioner and Bureau Chief. Through a collaboration between the Health Department and other agencies, they were able to get Mr. B the assistance he needed for housing and other opportunities he may have been qualified to use.

During these past months, the inspector has kept in touch with Mr. B. He was still living with his friend. Mr. B has recently been placed in a very nice senior living apartment complex not far from his friend. To assist with the transition of moving into a new home, the health department purchased various items for Mr. B to continue on his journey.

The department's vision is to have a healthy environment where citizens live healthier lives and their promise is to make life better for all citizens and to promote access to health care services.

Mr. B is a prime example of thier promise to protect, prevent and promote a safe, healthy environment for the citizens of St. Louis."

**Livingston County:** "Tom" is a community promoter of the Livingston County Health Center's Wellness and Weight Loss program as he lost approximately 102 lbs since beginning his journey to health in January of 2011. "I knew I was too big to exercise effectively, and therefore I had to start with weight loss," stated Tom. Once he had lost about 25 lbs., he began walking. He had difficulty walking even 10 minutes at first. "I was just so out of shape!" said Tom. Today, you can see him bike riding around town and he tries to put in 5-7 miles with each ride. Because of the weight loss and added activity in his life, his health is much improved. He has greatly reduced the medications he was taking for

his high cholesterol, his blood pressure is under control, and the pending diabetes is no longer as much of a concern. He now shares with new class participants about his weight loss and wellness tools that helped him to be successful.